

Residential Study Group (RSG)
December 14, 2017
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Arlington Town Hall, First Floor Conference Room
MEETING SUMMARY

Attendees: Pasi Miettinen; Bill Copithorne; Wynelle Evans; Jenny Raitt; Elizabeth Pyle; Steve McKenna; Janice Weber; Jonathan Nyberg; Mike Byrne; Rick Vallerelli

Guests: Wendy Richter, Master Plan Implementation Committee
Tim Lecuivre, Arlington Tree Warden

Jenny opened the meeting. The group made introductions.

Jenny provided updates on the status of zoning recodification. The Hearing Draft and guide were posted today for a hearing on January 8th. There will be four neighborhood meetings leading up to Special Town Meeting on February 12th. The Annual Town meeting warrant article filing deadline is January 26th – RSG members are not certain if articles that address noise abatement and energy efficient new homes will be ready by that time. There may be one or two citizen petitions filed that the RSG may have the opportunity to review.

Tim Lecuivre, Tree Warden, provided an update on the Town's tree preservation and protection bylaw. Tim works with the Town Tree Committee and Town Engineer and others to implement the bylaw. He explained how the bylaw works, discussed replacement tree rules, and the time to replant for compliance. He feels that implementation is going well so far – 90% of his reviews are for replanting. He feels that more public awareness needs to get out about the bylaw and about the available trees for planting on private property. Trees are supplemented from the Trees Please Fund.

Liz stated a concern that replacement trees are much smaller than existing trees (caliper current is 2.5 but could go to 4-5"). She also wondered if the fine should be increased. The fine should be higher than the cost to plant trees. What is the actual cost? Tim said that the Tree Committee is interested in advancing changes – larger replacement trees (6 DBH) and increasing fee. He suggested that Susan Stamps and other co-chair report back to group. The Tree Committee meets second Wednesday at 7:30 in Lyons Hearing Room. Liz and Wynelle are interested in attending this meeting and will report back to group.

Wendy expressed concern about tree protection during construction. She feels the bylaw could do more to protect trees during construction. Jonathan wondered about Lexington's approach to tree protection. Tim stated that Lexington has a very good program. They are 10 to 20 years ahead of us; they have an aggressive law. On the other hand, Concord just implemented a bylaw.

Steve asked if Arlington is able to address storm mitigation and still make room for planting new trees. Tim stated that they were not many instances of tree removal in conflict with mitigation

Wynelle and Liz will follow-up with Tree Committee co-chairs and share info with RSG on their potential Tree Bylaw amendments.

Wynelle presented information to the group about Design Guidelines. The presentation explained what design guidelines can do. They can be more detailed, non-binding. Wynelle researched examples of guidelines from across the country. She noted that the guidelines are prolific in the UK. She tried to find more Greater Boston examples, but there were many more examples of commercial design guidelines than residential.

She explained why design guidelines could work in Arlington and what types of issues that could be addressed through design, including bigger homes, repetitive designs, “flat” homes, and poorly designed additions, dormers, and other features. Newport Street is an example of review of issues and possibilities for Arlington.

Jenny will follow-up and determine the different design guideline options for Arlington and cost of implementation.

The group moved to providing updates from the sub-groups. Liz stated that another meeting is being scheduled to address noise abatement. Jonathan said that the Housing Plan Implementation Committee has drafted a proposal for accessory apartments. They looked at zoning bylaws in Newton and Lexington, and in other communities. The ARB is going to have a discussion about the accessory apartment proposal at their next meeting. Pasi provided an update and stated that he would like to schedule a tour of energy efficient homes in Marlborough and Westwood. Wynelle, Jonathan, Jenny, and Steve are interested in attending.

Meeting summaries were approved. Wynelle moved and Pasi seconded the October 6th summary and Liz moved and Steve seconded the November 8th summary.

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